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ABSTRACT

This document presents a policy framework designed to foster action to prevent child victimization and the likelihood that children living in high risk situations will engage in adolescent and/or later life criminal behavior. It applies to children ages 0 to 12 years. Eight sections include: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Policy Background" (a focus on early intervention and models of prevention: transforming knowledge into action); (3) "The Role of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention"; (4) "Key Policy Concerns" (key challenges and optimal points of intervention); (5) "Guiding Principles" (e.g., focus on children and families living in conditions of multiple risk and engage children and families in the process); (6) "Goals and Objectives" (foster community action and promote conditions that will prevent childhood victimization and early onset of criminal behavior); (7) "Components" (public awareness and education, comprehensive strategies and models, tools and resource development, and research and knowledge development); and (8) "Funding Overview." Two appendixes present data on crime prevention and childhood experiences, situations, and potential adverse consequences, and factors that contribute to positive outcomes for children and youth. (SM)

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ED 461 703

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING CRIME PREVENTION AND CHILDREN AGES 0 TO 12

NATIONAL STRATEGY
ON COMMUNITY SAFETY
AND CRIME PREVENTION

NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION CENTRE
JUNE 2000

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Policy Framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Children ages 0 to 12

National Strategy
on Community Safety
and Crime Prevention

National Crime Prevention Centre
June 2000

Canada

Également disponible en français sous le titre :
Cadre stratégique pour la prévention du crime chez les enfants âgés de 0 à 12 ans.

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National Crime Prevention Centre
284 Wellington Street
Ottawa (Ontario)
Canada
K1A 0H8

Toll-free: 1-877-302-6272

Tel. : (613) 941-9306
Fax: (613) 952-3515
E-mail: **ncpc@crime-prevention.org**

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The National Crime Prevention Centre, located within the Department of Justice, is responsible for implementing the *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention*, in partnership with the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada.

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Policy Framework for Crime Prevention and Children: Funding Focus

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present a Policy Framework to foster action that will prevent child victimization and the likelihood that children living in situations of risk will engage in adolescent and/or later life criminal behaviour. This Policy Framework has been developed at the request of the National Steering Committee on Community Safety and Crime Prevention. It will assist the National Crime Prevention Centre, the body responsible for implementing the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention (the Strategy), in identifying, managing and, ultimately, funding priority issues.

This Policy Framework applies to children ages 0 to 12. Children are an established priority of Phase II of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, announced in 1998. National Crime Prevention Centre intends to implement this Policy Framework in conjunction with complementary policy frameworks for the Strategy's other priorities—youth (ages 12 to 18[1]), Aboriginal populations, and women and girls' personal security.

The Strategy is part of an evolving approach that involves many players in fostering the healthy, secure, pro-social development of children and communities. It operates within the context of the National Children's Agenda and the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Social Union Agreement. It acknowledges that provincial and territorial governments and other federal departments have primary responsibility for children and are best placed to foster optimum healthy development. It recognizes that community safety and the positive social development of children are linked, and that integrated approaches across sectors are desirable. The Strategy helps communities create and maintain safe and violence-free environments that will enable children to grow up in healthy, pro-social ways. It focuses on secondary prevention, particularly community efforts to address the multiplicity of risk factors that contribute to:

- child victimization; and
- adolescent and/or later life criminal behaviour.

B. Organization of this Document

This document provides an overview of:

- the policy background concerning children and crime prevention;
- the role of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention;
- key policy concerns;

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[1] Although "to age 18" is the upper age limit of the Youth and Crime Prevention Policy Framework, the National Strategy may also address crime prevention issues concerning young at-risk adults.

- guiding principles;
- goal and objectives;
- components and funding focus.

2. POLICY BACKGROUND

A. A Focus on Early Intervention

Childhood Development and Risk Factors Related to Crime and Victimization

Years of research show that childhood development hinges on a complex interplay between individual and environmental factors and experiences. For example, studies from fields such as health, social services and crime prevention demonstrate the profound effects that fetal and early childhood development have on an individual's later physical and mental well-being and social behaviour. Other studies have shown what happens when a child's development is compromised. For example, longitudinal studies of children in Canada and other countries have traced the paths of antisocial behaviour—including criminal behaviour—back as far as the presence of risk factors during prenatal and early childhood stages. There are many pieces to this complex puzzle and there are potential life-long consequences (see Appendix A). On the one hand, for example, a lack of family and social support jeopardizes healthy development and may increase a child's vulnerability to victimization and to "problem" behaviours. On the other, protective factors such as caring parenting can help children build resiliency in the face of adversity.

There are also significant differences in the childhood experiences of girls and boys at different ages and stages. These differences result in gender-specific patterns of victimization and behaviours. A web of interrelated factors, such as cultural norms and trends, also contribute to the social acceptance of, or indifference to certain forms of crimes against—or offending behaviours perpetrated by—children.

It is important to remember that in Canada, children under 12 years of age who are involved in incidents reported to the police are considered under the age of criminal responsibility and their problem behaviours are dealt with through provincial child welfare authorities.[2] In 1997, 1.5% of incidents reported by police to the Revised Uniform Crime Reporting Survey involve children under 12 years of age.[3] These incidents account for 5,169 of a total of 345,390 reported incidents. The vast majority (81%) of these incidents are property related; 16% involve assaults and 3% involve other *Criminal Code* offences. Boys account for the majority (82%) of accused in all incidents involving children under 12 years of age. However, early intervention with children exhibiting behavioural markers, such as the early onset of aggressive or disruptive behaviour, hyperactivity, and/or poor performance in school (or lack of school readiness)

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2 For more information on children under the age of criminal responsibility, refer to the Department of Justice Web site: *http://canada.justice.gc.ca*

3 It is important to note that not all incidents involving children under 12 are reported to police.

have been found to be effective in reducing the likelihood of later involvement in crime during adolescence and adulthood.

B. Models of Prevention: Transforming Knowledge into Action

Under Phase I of the Strategy, the National Crime Prevention Council developed a set of crime prevention models[4] that identify the factors that:

- place children at risk of victimization;
- contribute to offending among children; and
- foster resiliency—the ability to cope with adversity.

Table 1: Crime Prevention Model: Prenatal to Six Years of Age

Level	Goals	Means
Prenatal	Promote healthy babies.	Prepared parents. Supports to parents.
Birth	Facilitate attachments and prevent child abuse.	Home visiting/supports. Early identification of difficulties.
Family	Increase family cohesion. Improve parenting skills.	Range of supports to parents and families.
Toddler/Preschool	Encourage cognitive and social development. Reduce aggressive behaviours.	Early child care/education with family involvement to children whose families require assistance Community/societal actions to prevent violence.
School	Improve school outcomes.	School-based initiatives.

[4] National Crime Prevention Council (1997) *Preventing Crime by Investing in Families: An Integrated Approach to Promote Positive Outcomes in Children;* National Crime Prevention Council (1997) *Preventing Crime by Investing in Families: Promoting Positive Outcomes in Children Six to Twelve Years Old.*

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Table 2: Crime Prevention Model: 6 to 12 Years of Age

Level	Goals	Means
Family	Promote competent parenting and prevent child abuse/family violence.	Skills training. Societal actions to prevent violence. Range of community-based supports.
School	Improve school outcomes and foster pro-social behaviour.	Initiatives to increase commitment to school and academic achievement. Anti-bullying programs. Anti-violence/healthy relationships. Media awareness instruction. Training to prevent substance abuse.
Peers	Increase social skills and reduce aggressive behaviour.	Social skills development. Supervised recreation. Non-structured play. Adequate monitoring of children.
Community	Promote community development and community identity.	Community events. Recreation activities and spaces. Increased public awareness of community resources. Volunteer core.

Early intervention is one of the most effective ways of preventing problem behaviour from emerging. Community-based, universally available programs that support healthy early child development and the acquisition of pro-social behaviours are one avenue. Community-based programs that target families and communities with children who are at risk of developing problem behaviour are another.

There is a reasonable amount of evidence on which to focus crime prevention efforts concerning children in various settings.[5] Community-based, prevention and early intervention approaches that are sensitive to the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and other key characteristics of families and communities, and to children's needs and abilities can yield significant benefits. This can include prevention measures such as prenatal care, at home

> "Preventive interventions over the first three years of life for at risk families clearly reduce the prevalence and the seriousness of behaviour problems. It appears clear that money invested in well-planned early prevention efforts with at-risk families will give greater payoffs than money invested in later preventive efforts with the same at-risk families."
>
> — Dr. Richard Tremblay (1997) "Why Invest in Early Childhood Development?"

[5] Sherman, L.W. et al. (1997) *Preventing Crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising.* College Park, Maryland: University of Maryland, National Institute of Justice; McCain, Norrie, Mustard, Margaret, and Mustard, J. Fraser. (1999) *The Early Years Study: Final Report.* Toronto: The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research; Richard Tremblay. (1997) "Why Invest in Early Child Development?" Breakfast on the Hill Seminar Series. Ottawa: Humanities and Social Science Federation of Canada.

support for parents of newborns and infants, infant cognitive stimulation and parent training to ensure that children get a healthy start. Early intervention measures such as school-based violence prevention and conflict resolution programs, as well as support and training for parents and teachers dealing with children who display disruptive or aggressive behaviour can help to reduce risk of subsequent conflict with the law. Support programs that help boys and girls who have been exposed to violence in the home also show promise. Programs that promote nurturing, safe and supportive environments—in families, schools and other institutions, and communities—can have significant influence in fostering healthy child development, caring relationships, pro-social interest and engagement, and responsible behaviour.

Preventive action can occur in a variety of contexts, be directed to specific goals, and use specific means. In Phase II, the National Strategy has the opportunity to support communities in their efforts to address multiple risk factors that contribute to victimization of children and the early onset of criminal behaviour.

3. THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

A. Overview

Phase II of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention identifies children as a *priority*. The Strategy provides the opportunity to build on the Models for Children (0 to 6 years, 6 to 12 years) developed by the National Crime Prevention Council to strengthen ongoing efforts to prevent crime within Canadian communities.

The Strategy is premised on the following concepts:

- crime prevention through social development, with a focus on the root causes of crime; and,
- a "balanced approach" to solving crime problems, which includes social development and opportunities reduction activities.

Phase II has a special emphasis on building partnerships, and supporting community-designed and implemented crime prevention initiatives.[6] The Strategy is based on the understanding that many players—individuals, organizations, institutions, communities, governments and the private sector—can play a critical role in advancing crime prevention through social development. The Strategy is one of myriad ways to strengthen community capacity to address crime prevention issues affecting children. The Policy Framework for Crime Prevention and Children emphasizes social development strategies and root causes, with the desired end effect of fostering well-nurtured and protected children in caring communities.

[6] Under the Strategy, "community" can be defined in either geographic terms such as neighbourhoods or towns, or as shared goals/experiences.

The National Strategy utilizes several mechanisms.

The **Safer Communities Initiative** includes four program components: the Community Mobilization Program, the Investment Fund, the Partnership Program, and the Business Action Program.

The Community Mobilization Program focuses on supporting communities to develop comprehensive and sustainable crime prevention activities that address *root causes* of crime. The program fosters collaborative community-level partnerships, public awareness, and capacity building within diverse communities. The Program is intended to build upon crime prevention activities that are already under way throughout the country. The involvement of provincial/territorial governments, through Joint Management Committees, is key.[7]

The Program recognizes that communities are at different developmental stages in addressing crime. Some need to find ways to develop the basic infrastructure to begin planning. Others already have established goals, objectives and activities in place. The Program is designed to provide support and investment that is tailored to the specific needs of communities, including needs assessment, planning, training, information dissemination, skills development, conflict resolution, consensus development, or evaluation.

The Investment Fund focuses on building and sharing knowledge about effective crime prevention initiatives in Canada. The Fund supports selected demonstration, research and evaluation projects across Canada. These projects will help decision makers and practitioners identify, evaluate and share information about innovative models of crime prevention. In particular, the Fund supports research and evaluation that assesses the costs, benefits and overall effectiveness of comprehensive efforts to prevent crime and victimization in different environments and circumstances. This knowledge will help to develop new programs and make improvements to existing programs, ultimately creating a more cost-effective, integrated approach to crime prevention in Canada.

The Partnership Program focuses on supporting the direct involvement of non-governmental organizations (national and international) in community crime prevention initiatives. The Program helps such organizations to provide information, tools and resources that will help communities get involved in, and share information on, crime prevention initiatives. The Program supports activities such as needs assessment tools, expert advice and consultation; seminars and conferences; training and professional development on delivering community-based crime prevention programming; research and development of community resources and materials; and the development of monitoring and evaluation tools for crime prevention programs.

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[7] Each Committee includes representatives of the provincial/territorial government, the federal government, and other partners and community members involved in crime prevention initiatives.

The Business Action Program focuses on building and expanding the commitment of the private sector to reduce crime and improve community safety. It is designed to encourage business and professional communities to become more involved in making Canadian communities safer. The Program supports activities that will raise awareness of crime prevention as well as foster business support and involvement in crime prevention, including the provision of resources, tools and supports that will help to improve the quality of life in Canadian communities.

In addition, the **Promotion and Public Education Program** is designed to increase awareness and knowledge about crime and victimization and effective responses to them. The Program challenges Canadians of all ages and walks of life to be active in creating a safer environment for themselves, their families and neighbours. The Program supports the dissemination of "lessons learned" from projects funded through the National Strategy.

4. KEY POLICY CONCERNS

A. Key Challenges

In recent years, there has been growing acceptance that a comprehensive set of multi-layered strategies—that span from individual to societal levels—is needed to prevent childhood victimization and the early onset of criminal behaviour.

Research is continually refining our understanding of the role and interplay of risk factors in crime and victimization. This interplay is complex and there are no clear lines of cause and effect. Consequently, many policy areas, such as health, social, housing, the economy and the justice system, have a bearing on crime prevention. To develop an integrated approach, strategies that address underlying societal factors such as poverty and unemployment, abuse and neglect, inadequate schooling and housing—as well as strategies that address more immediate individual, family and community risk factors—need to be linked to crime prevention policy.

From the perspective of the Strategy, which emphasizes a crime prevention through social development approach, the primary task is to identify the changeable risk factors associated with crime and victimization and support the development and implementation of crime prevention solutions that involve individuals, families and community.

Collaboration and partnership development across sectors and disciplines is also an important component, because this form of development builds integration.

The key challenges for the Strategy are therefore in:

- building complementary languages and visions of crime prevention through social development across sectors and disciplines;

- identifying effective ways to reduce or minimize the multiplicity of risk factors associated with crime and victimization affecting children;
- fostering the development of a repertoire of appropriate tools to address situations of risk related to crime and victimization—at individual, family and community levels; and
- fostering integration of efforts across sectors and disciplines, given the range of child-service resources whose efforts contribute to crime prevention.

B. Optimal Points of Intervention

Given the range of issues and players involved in early intervention, what are the optimal points of intervention for the Strategy? Comprehensive approaches are required to cover the "waterfront" of prevention—from prenatal programs that can ensure children receive a healthy beginning to behavioural change programs for young boys (and girls) who display aggressive and disruptive behaviour. This effort requires a range of resources, disciplines and players beyond those in the justice system, and coordination of mandates and resources. The Strategy's particular "niche" is focused on crime and victimization issues from a secondary prevention perspective. Supporting Canadian communities in their efforts to help children and families living in multiple risk situations that contribute to crime and victimization is one of the Strategy's priorities

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Policy Framework on Addressing Crime Prevention and Children rests on the following principles:

1. **Focus on children and their families who are living in conditions of multiple risk.**

The Strategy is designed to promote crime prevention through social development, focusing on the conditions of risk that are associated with crime and victimization. The evidence is clear: children who are living in conditions of multiple risk are at higher risk of a range of behavioural problems that may contribute to offending behaviour through adolescence and into adulthood. A focus on supporting families and communities so that they can address multiple risk factors that contribute to crime and victimization is therefore effective use of the Strategy's resources.

2. **Recognize and reflect difference and diversity among children, their families and their communities.**

The Strategy should reflect the difference and diversity that exists among children, their families and their communities. It should reflect and seek to further understand the differences in experience that relate to factors such as age, developmental stage, Aboriginal status, class, disability, culture, language, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. In order to reflect diversity, it should demonstrate flexibility in the definition of "family." It should recognize that communities are at different stages of

development and be flexible and enable tailored approaches to meet evolving community needs. A particular focus on addressing needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities should be considered.

3. **Integrate an understanding of the gendered dimension of risk and work toward gender-sensitive solutions.**

There are gender specific differences in childhood experiences, including exposure to and interplay among risk factors. These differences, in turn, manifest in gender-specific patterns of victimization and behaviour. It is critical that the Strategy be grounded in an understanding of the gendered dimension risk, settings and situations, and work toward gender-sensitive solutions.

4. **Engage children at risk and their families in the process.**

The Strategy should include a commitment to actively engage children at risk (in a way appropriate to their level of development) and their families in meaningful ways. A respectful, participatory, empowerment approach is consistent with the principles of crime prevention through social development and will help to enhance outcomes. Special care should be taken to avoid labelling or projections of criminality.

5. **Engage and sustain community participation in crime prevention issues affecting children at risk.**

The Strategy provides an opportunity for communities to innovate and build capacity. It also raises the challenge of finding ways to sustain activity following discontinuation of federal funding. Ways to foster sustainability—including linkages with other community institutions or structures such as recreational facilities, libraries, cultural centres, etc.—need to be considered at the outset of new project work.

6. **Strengthen collaboration across disciplines and sectors involved in the social development of children at risk.**

Crime prevention through social development requires a commitment to collaborative approaches. It involves an openness to develop new ideas, opportunities and partnerships across disciplines and sectors such as justice, health, education, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Efforts supported by the Strategy are best integrated with other community social support systems (both formal and informal) that help children at risk and their families. It should emphasize practical support and encourage the use of formal and informal mechanisms to reach out to children at risk and their families.

7. **Link with other frameworks, strategies or mechanisms that can contribute to optimum social development of children.**

To facilitate a horizontal approach to crime prevention, it is necessary to develop linkages with other players who have key roles in addressing issues related to crime prevention

and children. The National Children's Agenda (NCA) recognizes the need for a range of activities to promote and support the healthy development of children. This includes efforts to support parents and strengthen families, enhance childhood development and learning experiences, improve income security, and support safe, nurturing environments. The Strategy's contribution to the NCA involves a particular focus on multiple risk situations that may lead to later life stage criminal behaviour, with the view of fostering an integrated approach. Linkages with the provinces and territories and with other federal departments are critical as they play a central role in addressing the needs of young children and their families.

Linkages, where appropriate, should be made with a range of:

- federal government initiatives that support the healthy and pro-social development of children in Canada[8];
- provincial and territorial strategies that aim to improve the healthy and pro-social development of children in Canada, including preventive, supportive, and protective strategies;
- Aboriginal community policies, initiatives and programs that aim to improve the quality of community life for Aboriginal children and foster engagement in community development activities;
- community-based policies, initiatives and programs that aim to improve the quality of community life for children and foster engagement in community development activities;
- international action that aims to advance child well-being.

8. Strengthen the internal cohesion of the Strategy.

The Strategy identifies the following priority target groups: children, youth, Aboriginal populations and women. There are multiple points of intersection among all of these groups, and within each funding component of the Strategy. Solutions that respect diversity must also be considered throughout all aspects of the Strategy.

6. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goal

The goal of the Policy Framework is to:

- ***Foster community action and promote conditions that will prevent childhood victimization and the early onset of criminal behaviour.***

B. Objectives

[8] For a list of federal government programs and services, refer to: Status of Women Canada, *Guide to Federal Government Programs and Services for Women 1999-2000* and Health Canada, *Guide to Federal Government Services for Children and Youth 1999*.

The specific objectives are to build on identified factors and conditions that contribute to child victimization and the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour at later life stages by:

- supporting communities in developing and testing strategies to address factors and conditions that place children at risk;
- identifying and promoting "best practices" within families and communities that can reduce or minimize factors and conditions that place children at risk of victimization, and the early onset of criminal behaviour;
- identifying and promoting conditions that produce pro-social individuals, families and communities and will help prevent crime.

Informal and formal support systems in the community—families, peers, and organizations—play a critical role in efforts to reach these objectives.

C. Priority Focus

Community safety, secure family environments and the positive social development of children are linked in many ways. The presence of direct and linked risk factors that undermine the personal security of children therefore need to be addressed from various perspectives and requires collaboration among various players. The Strategy's focus is on developing community-based ways to address issues related to children and families living in conditions of multiple risk. This may include social development strategies focusing on the following:

- Children and families living in situations where risk factors (or combinations of risk factors) are present in the home, such as violence and abuse; substance use and/or addiction; disorganized, unstable and/or criminal lifestyle exercised by family members; and siblings who have exhibited serious behavioural difficulties. Strategies that focus on children and families living in situations of relative disadvantage, or who are marginalized due to factors such as race, Aboriginal status, class background, disability, homelessness, and addiction/fetal alcohol effects (FAE), among others, as well as children and families living in communities that are at high risk and/or in high need[9] are priority considerations.
- Children who display behavioural signs that indicate that they are at risk of coming into conflict with the youth justice system when they reach adolescence. The signs may include: early onset of aggressive behaviour, bullying and other disruptive behaviours in childcare and/or school, early conflict with the law, association with peers and youth involved in gangs. FAE is also a consideration. It is important to note

[9] High-risk or high-need communities include communities where personal security risks are high, and may include rural or isolated communities where specific needs concerning children and their families have not been addressed or are only now emerging. It may include communities where there are few early intervention supports for children and families (formal and/or informal) available. It also includes communities experiencing rapid or disconcerting change, communities experiencing or nearing crisis, etc.

that behavioural signs may vary by factors such as the child's age, developmental stage and gender.

Links to other Priority Foci of the Strategy

Addressing crime prevention issues related to Aboriginal children, their families and communities is a particular priority focus of the Strategy.

7. COMPONENTS

The components described below reflect the previously identified priorities and are based on recognized model strategies. Refer also to Appendix B for additional detail.

A. Public Awareness and Education

Public awareness and education is necessary to ensure that society appreciates the need for and benefits of investing in children from a crime prevention perspective. Public awareness and education can help build shared community responsibility for the health and social development of young children who are living in conditions of multiple risk. Ongoing public awareness and education needs to make the links between situations of risk and crime prevention, and also needs to promote the importance of protective factors such as positive family and community support. Public awareness and education is also needed to dispel myths (such as all children who live in poverty and/or single-parent families have problems), prevent stigmatization, and most importantly, to promote the positive action that instills hope and a sense of self-efficacy.

There are opportunities from the community level to the national level to support public awareness and education, with a particular emphasis on culturally appropriate community-based activities that respect difference and diversity.

Focus	Rationale	Remarks
National Level	National efforts to build and support public awareness and education of the importance of investment in children from a crime prevention perspective are needed (e.g., early intervention programs, positive parenting).	Links with other federal, provincial and territorial public awareness and education activities, (e.g., the National Children's Agenda, Family Violence Initiative, child health) to ensure a complementary approach, promote crime prevention messages and avoid duplication. Could include public, NGO and private sector involvement. Utilize existing mechanisms such as the Promotion and Public Education Program to promote ideas and best practices concerning early intervention etc.
Community Level	Community involvement in prevention education efforts engages citizens and ensures a responsive approach.	Mechanisms such as the Community Mobilization Program are ideally positioned to support public education and awareness, particularly in communities that do not have well-developed or integrated services to address at-risk children and their families. This should encourage participation of community institutions of relevance to children and their families, (e.g., health centres, libraries, recreation centres, schools.) There should also be a mechanism to enable communities to share ideas and learn from each other's experiences.

Primary Funding Mechanism—National level: NCPC; Community level: Community Mobilization Program.

B. Comprehensive Strategies and Models

Comprehensive strategies and models involve a range of players and offer integrated approaches to service delivery in communities. From the crime prevention perspective, such strategies and models need to be targeted toward and developed and tested in situations where children are living in conditions of multiple risk. There should be a focus on community-development processes designed to address conditions of risk at individual, family and community levels. The investment of multiple funding partners and rigorous assessment/audit of a community's crime prevention needs as well as planning, implementation, monitoring is also required.

Communities may be at different stages of development. Consequently, they have different needs and may need to consider different approaches to infrastructure development, capacity building, and partnership development and implementation. In some communities a build "from the ground up" approach may be required. In others, there may be existing programs or services that could be tested and evaluated as potential models.

Of high priority for this component are rigorous strategies and models at the following levels:

At the community level—

- at-risk Aboriginal children and families living in "inner city" communities in urban centres, such as: Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, and Winnipeg;

- at-risk Aboriginal children and families living in northern and/or isolated communities;

- at-risk children and their families who experience relative disadvantage (e.g., children and families that are visible minorities, recent immigrants, homeless) in a variety of community settings (e.g., inner city communities, towns).

At a targeted level—

- children under 12 years of age who exhibit "offending" behaviour;

- children under 12 years of age whose behaviour suggests that they are at significant risk of coming into conflict with the law when they turn 12 years, e.g., children showing early onset of aggressive, bullying and other disruptive or anti-social behaviours in childcare and/or school.

Linkages with existing provincial/territorial and community support systems are essential.

Primary Funding Mechanism—Community Mobilization Program and/or Investment Fund.

C. Tools and Resource Development

A range of tools and resources that will facilitate community development and action to prevent the likelihood that children living in situations of risk will engage in adolescent and/or later life criminal behaviour.

Primary Funding Mechanism—the Partnership Program can be used to develop, refine and promote tools that help communities develop and sustain comprehensive strategies.

D. Research and Knowledge Development

A unique contribution of the Strategy should be to support the development of knowledge that can help to broaden and deepen understanding of how to prevent victimization and the onset of offending behaviour among children living in situations of multiple risk. Knowledge development must be addressed to the various ages and stages and should include diversity issues, including gender-specific research. The Strategy should build

linkages to researchers within the academic community who are working on early intervention and prevention issues concerning children, victimization and offending behaviour.

The intention of the Strategy is to fill "gaps" in the knowledge base that are hampering policy and program development. A community-based focus or application would be an essential component of the research. Potential areas for research and knowledge development include, but are not limited to:

- "best practices" research to determine and apply criteria for identifying best practices in various areas of intervention;
- conceptual and applied research on situations of risk, on protective factors and resiliency;
- research and development of tools to aid in the identification of children at high risk of victimization and/or offending, including gender and culturally sensitive tools;
- identification of gaps in knowledge about evaluated interventions for children, for example, children who have been exposed to or are victims of family violence, and conduct research to fill those gaps;
- research and development of tools, models and approaches regarding Aboriginal children and their families to aid the development of successful responses;
- alternative research (e.g., participatory research studies, qualitative studies, descriptive studies) that will provide parents, children, families and communities with an opportunity to voice their concerns, and develop, implement and evaluate solutions;
- Diversity and gender-sensitive research on existing prevention models and programs targeted to "children".

Note: there would need to be a corresponding "dissemination/promotion" component via the NCPC for any research or knowledge products produced. This will be addressed through the Public Education and Promotion component of the Strategy.

Primary Funding Mechanism—National Level: NCPC; Community Mobilization Program and Investment Fund as appropriate.

8. FUNDING OVERVIEW

An overview of the priorities, activities, and related considerations is provided in Appendix B: Funding Focus.

APPENDIX A

1. **Crime Prevention and Childhood Experiences, Situations and Potential Adverse Consequences**
2. **Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes for Children and Youth**

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1. Crime Prevention and Childhood Experiences, Situations and Potential Adverse Consequences

Experiences and Situations	Potential Adverse Consequences
Prenatal Experience:	
Inadequate nutrition, exposure to substances such as smoking, alcohol and drugs, violence and abuse directed at the expectant mother.	Low birth weight, fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), fetal alcohol effects (FAE), post-natal addiction, physical disabilities, cognitive deficits, learning difficulties, and other dispositional attributes (e.g., sociability, intelligence and activity) may be affected, leading to difficulties with child development tasks.
Family Situation:	
Parental isolation, young age of parents, insufficient parental understanding of the needs of babies and child development, insufficient parenting skills, low level of parent-child attachment.	Child maltreatment, injury, abuse and neglect. Inadequate cognitive and emotional stimulation to promote healthy development.
The presence of violence in the home.	Exposure to violence, in particular violence directed toward the mother may place girls at higher risk of becoming victimized within their own intimate relationships and may place boys at higher risk of becoming perpetrators within their own intimate relationships.
Exposure to negative or ineffective parenting styles/behaviours (including inappropriate/inconsistent use of discipline, abuse, neglect, rejecting, cold, uncaring or inconsistent parenting style, parental criminality, parental substance abuse/addiction, disorganized, criminal lifestyle within the family).	Uncaring, inconsistent parenting/caregiving may undermine individual sense of self-worth and well-being. Inappropriate role modelling (e.g., parenting style and behaviours, lifestyle behaviour such as substance abuse) sends wrong messages about acceptable behaviour within interpersonal relationships (including gender relationships).
Exposure to negative behaviours/influences by other family members (e.g. siblings).	Victimization, including sexual assault, physical assault, and other forms of abuse may cause physical, intellectual and psychological harm and interfere with child development tasks. Victimization may lead to the use of inappropriate coping mechanisms among children, (e.g., direct and indirect aggressive, bullying behaviour, running away, self-destructive behaviour, difficulties at school, etc.). These behavioural patterns, including their frequency and severity, vary by factors such as age, development stage and gender.
Individual Situation:	
Hyperactivity. Conduct disorders. Disabilities. Conditions such as FAE.	Individual health and social development factors may contribute to learning and behavioural problems, increase the risk of victimization, failure to learn alternatives to aggression, self-destructive behaviour, increased risk of engaging in offending behaviours throughout future life stages (adolescence and adulthood). Adolescents with "behavioural" problems are also at higher risk of other life problems such as unemployment, poor physical and mental health. Patterns vary by factors such as age, developmental stage and gender.

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Experiences and Situations	Potential Adverse Consequences
Peer Relationships:	
Anti-social, pro-crime peers. Peer rejection. Peer discrimination (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, race, ability).	Association with anti-social, pro-crime peers may contribute to risk-taking/offending behaviours. Peer rejection and discrimination reinforces isolation and undermines individual identity and community attachment. Patterns vary by factors such as age, developmental stage and gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc.
Societal Conditions/Environments:	
Inadequate social/economic conditions and supports. Societal values concerning gender roles. Discrimination (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, culture, disability). Exposure to media violence.	Inadequate social and economic conditions and supports, (e.g., lack of adequate support for prenatal health, parenting child care, employment, housing, recreational opportunities, schools) undermine healthy development. Community breakdown, lack of community identity and sense of citizenship. Societal values that undermine diversity and equal participation contribute to patterns of power, dominance and control. Media violence reinforces acceptability of violence as a way to resolve conflicts.

2. Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes for Children and Youth

Level	Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes
Individual	Active, positive engagement and participation in family, school and community activity. Motivated, committed to learning. Pro-social values (e.g., caring, respect, equality, social justice, responsibility). Social age-appropriate competencies (e.g., problem-solving skills, conflict resolution skills, emotion management, positive coping skills, interpersonal skills, resistance skills). Good self-esteem and sense of identity and self-worth Trust, optimism and a sense of hope. Sense of personal empowerment, self-reliance and independence.
Family	Supportive family environment (prenatal—adulthood). Positive family communication. Positive family role models and healthy behaviours. Family sets clear, age-appropriate behavioural expectations and consequences and monitors child's whereabouts. Affectionate ties or bonds with a family member, (e.g., parent, grandparent, sibling) foster individual resiliency. Parental engagement in child's development, e.g., involvement in schooling, sports, recreation. Family attitudes/actions that value children and youth. Family attitudes/actions that respect and value identity, diversity and equality (e.g., gender, culture, ability, sexual orientation).
Peers	Friends who model pro-social, responsible behaviour. Positive peer influence.
Community	Positive adult role models. Supportive other adult relationships. Caring neighbours. Safe and caring neighbourhoods. Caring, respectful school environment that provides clear expectations, rules and consequences. Community attitudes/action that value children and youth. Community attitudes/action that respect and value identity, diversity and equality (gender, culture, ability, sexual orientation, etc.). Strategies that support child/youth engagement and participation. Access to formal supports through institutions such as schools, recreational centres, spiritual centres, etc. Access and/or exposure to pro-social ways of resolving problems (e.g., violence prevention programs, conflict resolution strategies). Opportunities for self-expression (e.g., through recreation, culture).

APPENDIX B
Policy Framework for Crime Prevention and Children: Funding Focus

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Overview

The focus of the children's crime prevention strategy is to support:

- activities that target *risk factors associated with victimization of children and that* place children at risk of engaging in criminal behaviour at later life stages. The Strategy can facilitate innovation by supporting the development, implementation and testing of comprehensive models and strategies particularly in community-specific settings that are at high risk or in high need;[1]

- the development of crime prevention knowledge, skills, resources and activities within "high-risk/high-need" communities where victimization of children is of concern;

- the development of crime prevention knowledge, skills, resources and activities to address crime prevention and victimization issues (through strategies such as early intervention) concerning at-risk populations of children within various communities, where multiple risk factors are present;

- the ongoing development and evaluation of comprehensive models and strategies and the identification of "best practices" to address crime prevention concerns related to children (from victimization and later life stage offending perspectives). This should include support for approaches that are interdisciplinary and linked to the broader community, foster partnerships, engage families and be gender and diversity sensitive or specific and take into account inter-related factors (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.).

[1] High-risk or high-need communities include communities where personal security risks are high, and may include rural or isolated communities where specific needs concerning children and their families have not been addressed or are only now emerging. It may include communities where few supports for children and families (formal and/or informal) are available. It also includes communities experiencing rapid or disconcerting change, communities experiencing or nearing crisis, etc.

Relationship of Crime Prevention and Children to the National Strategy Priorities. *Priority Focus on:* *Children and their families living in conditions of multiple risk.* *High-need and high-risk communities.*	*Community Mobilization Program* *The Community Mobilization Program should give high priority to activities that will help to reduce situations of risk and promote protective factors, with a particular focus on situations or settings involving children and their families living in conditions of multiple risk.* *Including* *Family, school and community situations that are high-risk or high-need, as well as communities in or nearing crisis, (e.g. with high crime rates, presence of other economic/structural factors that contribute to crime).* *Aboriginal Communities* *Urban Communities* *Rural Communities* *Isolated Communities* *Visible Minority Communities (urban and rural)*	*Investment Fund* *The Investment Fund should fund the implementation, testing and evaluation of comprehensive models and strategies.*	*Partnership Program* *The Partnership Program should build on existing formal and informal partnerships and networks operating in many communities with the view of creating an integrated, continuum of services for children and families living in conditions of risk. It should encourage the development of new or innovative partnerships, particularly in high-risk/high-need settings.* *It should encourage the development of resources, tools and information that will reduce risk, enhance protective factors, and build resiliency.*	*Business Action Program* *The Business Action Program should partner with communities to work toward improving the quality of life in Canadian communities in ways that will foster the healthy, pro-social development of children.*

Specific Populations of Concern	Community Mobilization Program	Investment Fund	Partnership Program	Business Action Program
	Crime Prevention Objective To promote conditions that produce pro-social individuals, families and communities to reduce victimization and prevent the likelihood of further victimization/offending during adolescence and later life stages.	*Crime Prevention Objective* To develop, evaluate and promote strategic interventions (or "best practices") that can reduce or minimize the risk factors associated with victimization of children and the likelihood of future victimization/offending during adolescence or later life stages.	*Crime Prevention Objective* To provide information to communities on how best to address victimization of children and risk factors/situations that may contribute to involvement in crime during adolescence and later life stages.	*Crime Prevention and Children Objective* To raise public awareness of ways to minimize risk factors/situations that contribute to victimization of children and to support families and communities in their efforts to facilitate pro-social behaviour as children develop and as they make the transition to adolescence, and to partner with the community to improve the quality of life for children in Canadian communities.
Children 0 to 6 and their families living in multiple conditions of risk	*Activities:* Community-based/family centred activities (using formal and informal networks) to foster conditions for healthy, pro-social child development, early intervention where appropriate (including early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Needs assessments, workshops, pilot projects to engage parents, families, communities on these issues.	*Activities:* Research and demonstration, evaluation, knowledge synthesis of community-based, family-centred approaches to early intervention (including the early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Research and demonstration to identify "best practices," demonstration and evaluation of new, innovative comprehensive models, evaluation of existing "promising" models. A range of community-based responses, in various settings, including early child development/family support services, pre-schools, etc., may be required.	*Activities:* Development of information, tools, resources to deal with community-identified concerns and issues, identification of risk factors and early intervention strategies (including strategies to prevent the early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Topic focus to be determined at the community level, but may be wide-ranging, e.g., practical tools to improve parenting competencies, tools to assist child-oriented service providers/ advocates in working with at-risk children and their families and communities, etc.	*Activities:* Private sector partnership development and support for early childhood development and parenting to reduce conditions of risk in which children live, as well as support for community activities (e.g., recreation) that facilitate pro-social behaviour. *Focus:* Foster awareness in work settings of the importance of early childhood development and effective parenting. Establish strategies and incentives for the development of family-friendly, flexible and supportive work environments, particularly sensitive to the needs of parents with young children. Establish and implement

Specific Populations of Concern	Community Mobilization Program	Investment Fund	Partnership Program	Business Action Program
	Considerations: Must help to establish or build on existing community knowledge, skills and approaches.	*Considerations:* Innovative approaches may include new approaches or the application of existing comprehensive approaches specifically to high-risk/high-need communities. Must include gender and diversity sensitive/specific approaches. Must help to develop comprehensive interdisciplinary models.	*Considerations:* Must include gender and diversity sensitive/specific approaches.	employment strategies that will assist families living in situations of risk. Support community efforts to respond to children at risk.
Children 6 to 12 and their families living in multiple conditions of risk	*Activities:* Community-based/family centred activities to foster conditions for healthy, pro-social child development, early intervention where appropriate (including early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Needs assessments, workshops, pilot projects to engage parents, families, communities on issues concerning strategies to reduce victimization, prevent the early onset of problem behaviour, and enhance pro-social development. *Considerations:* Must help to establish or build on existing community knowledge, skills and approaches.	*Activities:* Research and demonstration, evaluation, knowledge synthesis of community-based, family-supportive approaches to reduce risk factors, support early intervention (including the prevention of early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Research and demonstration to identify "best practices," demonstration and evaluation of new, innovative comprehensive models, evaluation of existing "promising" models. Focus on strategies to prevent victimization and strategies to prevent the early onset of aggressive behaviour. A range of community-based responses, in various settings, including school-based responses, may be required. *Considerations:* Innovative approaches may include new approaches or the application of existing comprehensive approaches specifically to high-risk/high-need communities. Must include gender and diversity sensitive/specific approaches.	*Activities:* Development of information, tools, resources to deal with community-identified concerns, identification of risk factors and early intervention strategies (including strategies to prevent the early onset of aggressive behaviour). *Focus:* Topic focus to be determined by community, but may be wide-ranging, e.g., practical tools to improve parenting competencies, school-based prevention programs (anti-violence, anti-bullying, etc.) to assist child-oriented service providers/advocates in working with at-risk children and their families, and communities, etc. *Considerations:* Must include gender and diversity sensitive/specific approaches.	*Activities:* Private sector partnership development and support for early childhood development and parenting to reduce conditions of risk in which children live. *Focus:* Foster awareness in work settings of the importance of healthy, pro-social childhood development and effective parenting. Establish strategies and incentives for the development of family-friendly, flexible and supportive work environments, particularly sensitive to the needs of parents with children. Establish and implement employment strategies that will assist families living in situations of risk.